

REVIEWS

John Carter, *Ethnicity, Exclusion and the Workplace*. (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003). 200 pp., \$62 Cloth.

This important volume attempts to evaluate and measure the impact of equal opportunities in the National Health Service and in part, on higher education (4) (i.e. the progress of ethnic minorities through their respective career hierarchies). The major dynamics at work are the desire on the part of excluded social groups to try to gain access into other occupational areas and the success of dominant social groups in closing a particular niche. Those of us who are interested in or confronted by ethnicity in our professional spheres should read this book.

The book consists of eight chapters. The first, "Ethnicity, Employment and Exclusion," looks at employment fortunes of ethnic minority groups in the UK and US, "to assess the extent to which they can be said to be upwardly socially mobile" (9). Chapter 2, "Equity, Policy and Outcomes," examines the construction of equality and affirmative action policies and their impact on employment opportunities. In "Strategies of Social Closure and Professional Cultures" he discusses forms and theories of social closure and demonstrates that strategies used are not only gendered but racialized, given the "hierarchies within and between occupations" (65). In "The Racialization of Nursing" he traces historical processes that led to certain types of nursing labor becoming ethnic enclaves or "occupational ghettos-that is, spaces within nursing profession abandoned by White labor and characterized by lack of occupational mobility, poor working conditions and poor pay" (85). Chapter 5,

"Ethnicity, Segregation and the National Health Service," explores the practices associated with recruitment and promotion. Chapter 6, "The Policy in Practice at Unicorn Trust," analyzes how the dual concepts of acceptability criteria and suitability criteria influence recruitment and promotion at Unicorn Trust. Chapter 7, "Racism, Institutional and Otherwise," presents a glaring picture of racism within different organizations "and... how unconscious assumptions about ethnic origin are rarely challenged" (161). In Chapter 8, "Conclusions," Carter condemns the skewed understanding of ethnic minorities as unqualified or not "fitting in." He reminds us that "no one should doubt the impact of 'race' within professional spheres and that it continues to exert a powerful influence over occupational mobility..." (176).

Ultimately, to appreciate how and why ethnic minority groups are confined to specific parts within professional organizations requires an understanding not only of the concepts of "race," racism, discrimination and segregation but, critically, a socio-historical understanding of the way any given profession constructs and reconstructs itself.... Simply put, it is crucial for policy-makers to understand the way that notions of "race" and the dynamics of racism are built and institutionalized into the structure and fabric of professional spheres.

To do so, the author applies ethnographic methods to classical survey methods. Tables and an index are a plus. Indeed, the richest parts of the book are the excerpts (unfortunately too short and sparse) from interviews with ethnic minority nurses and academics. It is more from the words of the marginalized than from the arguments of the author that the meaning of discrimination in the workplace for those who experience it emerges in all its glamour. In all the volume has furthered the debate about the racialization of the labor market by showing on the one hand the shortcomings of contemporary equal opportunity measures in UK and on the other that the forms of racism and discrimination that ethnic minorities experience differ across occupational or professional cultures.

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